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DE RUEHKO #0336/01 0530140

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9516
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA IMMEDIATE 8927
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA IMMEDIATE 5927
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA IMMEDIATE 1259
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE IMMEDIATE 2745
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO IMMEDIATE 9413
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUALSFJ/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3186
RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 000336

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/EP AND EAP/J

E.O.12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [KOCI](#) [MARR](#) [JA](#) [CH](#) [BM](#)
SUBJECT: CODEL WEBB HEARS JAPANESE VIEWS ON ALLIANCE AND
REALIGNMENT

REF: TOKYO 0188

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¶11. (SBU) SUMMARY: Senator Webb listened to Japanese views on the importance of the U.S.-Japan Alliance and the Futenma relocation issue during meetings with GOJ officials February 15 in Tokyo. Foreign Minister Okada, Defense Minister Kitazawa, Cabinet and Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) officials all affirmed that Japan's relationship with the United States remained fundamental and important for the Japanese Government. Although the primary purpose of the visit was to solicit Japanese views, Senator Webb suggested both countries should emphasize the many benefits the Alliance has brought to the region in terms of regional stability and economic growth. FM Okada and DM Kitazawa reiterated Prime Minister Hatoyama's pledge to reach a resolution to the Futenma Marine Air Station relocation issue by May this year (Reftel). Senator Webb also raised the child abduction issue with FM Okada and discussed the Japanese economy with the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ). END SUMMARY.

Foreign Minister Okada Meeting

¶12. (SBU) The U.S.-Japan relationship is the most important relationship to the United States, Senator Webb told Foreign Minister Okada, who responded that the U.S.-Japan Alliance should continue to play a strong role in the Asia-Pacific region. During the February 15 meeting, which the Ambassador joined, Senator Webb and FM Okada exchanged views on China. Senator Webb noted that China's growing economic power could lead to gains in other areas and that the United States and Japan need to stand united in dealing with China. On Burma, Senator Webb stated he advocates increased dialogue and business connections with Burma. FM Okada expressed appreciation for U.S. policy shifts on Burma and overall increased engagement with Southeast Asia. Regarding the situation over the Marine Corps Air Station at Futenma FM, Okada reiterated Japan's commitment to reach a solution by the end of May 2010.

¶13. (SBU) Senator Webb told FM Okada that parental child abduction

and the inability of U.S. left behind parents to see their children are very important to him and the United States. While noting that he does not at this point intend to raise the issue in the U.S. Senate, Senator Webb expressed hope that Japan would find a way to solve this issue. FM Okada said he fully acknowledges the importance of the issue, especially as Secretary Clinton raises it at every meeting with him. Regarding acceding to the Hague Convention, FM Okada reported that there are discussions in the Japanese Government on how to move forward and overcoming the challenges presented by the differences between Japanese domestic legislation and the Convention. Accession to treaties in general does not happen quickly, however, and consideration needs to be given to what can be done about the existing cases. If parents are having difficulty in meeting their children, FM Okada said, the Japanese Government needs to make efforts to help fix the situation.

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Fukuyama Meeting

¶4. (SBU) State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Tetsuro Fukuyama agreed with Senator Webb's assertion that the U.S.-Japan alliance was the most important relationship for each country, in a separate February 15 meeting that the DCM joined. Fukuyama added that Prime Minister Hatoyama wants to contribute as much as possible in Afghanistan and Iraq. Senator Webb said that after 9/11, with the U.S. focused on Iraq, it had lost focus on the most important region -- Asia -- and he has been speaking about the need to refocus on this area. In response to a question about the Senate's priorities, Senator Webb suggested infrastructure and financial regulation should be the first order of business. Regarding climate change, Senator Webb expressed doubts about the high costs and potential waste inherent in cap and trade programs, and doubted cap and trade legislation

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would pass in the Senate. He explained a bill he introduced with Senator Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) to double U.S. nuclear power production within 20 years and to launch five "Mini-Manhattan projects" to promote clean energy technologies, highlighting its simplicity and low cost. Fukuyama agreed with the need to expand the market for nuclear and renewable energy, but believes cap and trade -- while imperfect -- is also an important element for Japan. Turning to Overseas Development Assistance, Senator Webb noted Japan's increased aid to the Mekong River Delta and the importance of protecting riparian rights in the region. Fukuyama said Japan brought together a number of Southeast Asian heads of state last fall in Tokyo and intends to build on this dialogue.

Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Yabunaka Meeting

¶5. (SBU) Mitoji Yabunaka, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, remarked to Senator Webb during a February 15 meeting that he is very comfortable with U.S.-Japan working relationship. He also expressed a strong desire to see both countries take advantage of this year's 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Treaty to promote the many benefits the treaty has engendered. Senator Webb concurred that the U.S. -Japan relationship is a resilient one, and will only grow stronger in the future.

Defense Minister Kitazawa Meeting

¶6. (SBU) Although there have been difficult moments recently and there are concerns in some quarters about the direction of U.S. Japan security relations since the change of government in Japan, there is much reason to believe that a stronger alliance will be the final result, Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa told Senator Webb during their meeting on February 15. While it will be difficult to reconcile the complex issues associated with FRF, Kitazawa believes that this will be done eventually, and pointed to Prime Minister Hatoyama's oft-stated desire to reach a conclusion on the Futenma issue by May of this year. DM Kitazawa also took the opportunity to stress to Senator Webb the need to build bridges between Congress and members of the ruling coalition through parliamentary exchange,

noting that many members of the DPJ are young and lacking in substantial international affairs experience. Senator Webb noted that the U.S. must recognize the burden placed upon Okinawa, and do what it can to alleviate the situation there, while stressing that both countries benefit from the security arrangement. Senator Webb also suggested that both countries should emphasize the many benefits the Alliance has brought to the region in terms of regional stability and economic growth.

DPJ Diet Affairs Chairman Yamaoka Meeting

¶7. (SBU) During a February 15 meeting with Senator Webb, DPJ Diet Affairs Chairman and Ozawa confidant Kenji Yamaoka affirmed that Japan's relationship with the United States remained fundamental and important for the Japanese Government. Yamaoka said that when it came to national security, the United States was the only country on which Japan could fully rely. Regarding the Futenma Relocation Facility issue, Yamaoka informed Senator Webb of his intention to speak with leaders of the ruling coalition partners about seeking a way forward. He also assured Senator Webb that the Japanese Government will consult closely with the United States as it moves forward.

¶8. (SBU) Senator Webb relayed to Yamaoka the importance of the continued U.S. military presence to maintain the stability and prosperity of the Asia/Pacific region. Senator Webb added that China has been strategically marking its claims to islands surrounding Japan and it was important for the United States to show its consistent presence in the region. If not, the Chinese

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Government may perceive that U.S.-Japan bilateral relations were weak, and will continue to increase its military influence in the region. Yamaoka noted his agreement, adding that although Japan-China economic relations have deepened, China's military build-up remained an area of concern. He added that in his past conversations with Chinese leaders, he always made it clear that strengthening of Japan-China relations will in no way change U.S.-Japan relations. Senator Webb remarked that although it was important to maintain a healthy relationship with China, the United States and Japan should not allow China to divide the two countries.

Yamaoka agreed and assured Senator Webb that he will make sure China will not divide the United States and Japan.

American Chamber of Commerce in Japan Meeting

¶9. (SBU) Senator Webb had a productive one-hour meeting with ACCJ members over lunch on February 15. ACCJ leadership acknowledged the importance for business of the bilateral security relationship being on an even keel and highlighted its desire for a robust economic dialogue focused on structural reform; continued reform of Japan Post; engagement on trade issues to boost exports, increase FDI and solidify US leadership in Asia; and progress on regulatory reform issues multilaterally through hosting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). During free discussion, Senator Webb heard ACCJ members' views about the political situation in Japan, about how to increase foreign direct investment (FDI) in Japan, and the need for hard political decisions on both sides of the Pacific concerning economic policy issues. Regarding trade, members urged U.S. engagement on the Trans-Pacific Partnership and ratification of the United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

¶10. (U) The CODEL cleared this cable.

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